

Remarks:

Claims 9-19 are now pending in this application. Applicants present new claims 9-19 and have cancelled claims 1-8 to clarify the present invention. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application.

Applicants have amended the specification to insert section headings and reference to related applications.

The Examiner objected to the drawings as including the reference character "Q" that appears in Fig. 2, which is not mentioned in the specification. Applicants submit herewith under separate cover one sheet of corrected drawings. In Fig. 2, Applicants have changed the reference character "Q" to "S" to conform to the depiction in Fig. 1 and description in the specification. Applicants respectfully request approval of the corrected drawings.

Applicants have amended the specification at page 2, lines 32-35 to replace "then" with "than". Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 99/13795 to Salmonson et al. in view of U.S. patent 4,892,846 to Rogers et al. The Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salmonson et al. in view of U.S. patent 4,574,063 to Scherer.

Neither Salomonson et al. nor Rogers et al. suggests the present invention as recited in newly presented independent claim 9 since neither reference suggests a method of making artificial dental bridges that includes applying a suspension comprising particles to densely sintered high strength ceramic individual bridge parts, drying the suspension comprising particles to form a layer of particles, applying a suspension of glass material to the layer of particles, and heat treating the individual bridge parts with the applied layer of particles and the suspension of glass material with a one step heat treatment. Salomonson et al. does not suggest applying a suspension of particles and drying the suspension. The dried particle network provides the bridge with a sufficient strength to permit the bridge to be transported to a heating device without requiring a support structure. Additionally, Salomonson et al. does not suggest particle reinforced glass. The particle reinforced glass of the present invention has a higher resistance to cracking than the pure glass material suggested by Salomonson et al. Furthermore, Salomonson et al. does not suggest a one step heat treatment.

Rogers et al. does not suggest separately applying a particle suspension or a one step heat treatment. Therefore, Rogers et al. does not overcome the above-discussed deficiencies of Salomonson et al. As a result, the combination of Salomonson et al. and Rogers et al. does not suggest the present invention as recited in newly presented independent claim 9 or claims 10-19, which depend from claim 9.

Scherer does not overcome the above-discussed deficiencies of Salomonson et al. since, among other things, Scherer does not suggest applying a suspension of particles and drying the suspension, particle reinforced glass or a one step heat treatment. Therefore, the combination of

Salomonson et al. and Scherer does not suggest the present invention as recited in newly presented claim 19, which replaces claim 8 and which depends from claim 9.

In view of the above, the references relied upon in the office action, whether considered alone or in combination, do not suggest patentable features of the present invention. Therefore, the references relied upon in the office action, whether considered alone or in combination, do not make the present invention obvious. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections based upon the cited references.

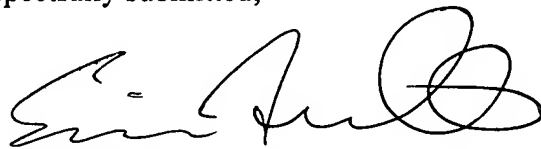
In conclusion, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this case and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance.

If an interview would advance the prosecution of this case, Applicants urge the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The undersigned authorizes the Commissioner to charge fee insufficiency and credit overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 22-0261.

Respectfully submitted,

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